

THE NEW PLAYS.

"ON the Hiring Line" is the title of a new satirical comedy by Harvey O'Higgins and Harriet Ford, which George C. Tyler will present to-morrow night at the Criterion Theatre.

The play deals with the well known servant problem from what is described in the preliminary announcements as "an entirely new angle." Its scenes are laid in a country home on Long Island, and the treatment throughout is in the vein of light comedy. A most unusual method for obtaining and holding servants is followed by the master of the house, with distinctly disastrous results to his peace of mind.

Laura Hope Crews, last seen with Cyril Maude in "The Saving Grace," will have an important role, as will Cyril Scott, who has been touring in the hinterland with "Polly with a Past" for more than a year. Donald Gallaher will be seen in one of the juvenile roles for which he is so well known, and Minna Gombell, remembered for her performance in "The Indestructible Wife," is also a member of the company. John Blair is to be seen as an actor friend of the family, and Josephine Hall, a musical comedy player fifteen years ago, will have a character part. Robert Hudson, last season leading man with Patricia Collinge in "Tillie," is also in the cast, as is Sidney Toler, who will have a character comedy role. Vivian Tobin of the Tobin family will play the ingenue role.

The play has been staged under the direction of Frederick Stanhope.

Lee and J. J. Shubert will present the Winter Garden's annual revue, "The Passing Show of 1919," next Thursday. This will be the eighth "Passing Show" of the series, the first one having been seen at the Winter Garden in 1912. These Winter Garden annual revues differ from the extravaganzas produced at that playhouse in that they are made up in large part of skits on topical conditions of the time and travesties on the more important dramatic successes of the year. As to the latter, it is not necessary that the auditor should have seen the original to enjoy the fun.

"The Passing Show of 1919" will be in two acts and twenty scenes. The book and lyrics are by Harold Atteridge and the music by Jess Schwartz. Of the twenty-six productions made at the Winter Garden Mr. Atteridge has provided the book and lyrics for twenty-two. This will be the third annual revue for which Mr. Schwartz has provided the music, the first being "The Passing Show of 1913."

The new "Passing Show" has been staged by J. C. Huffman and the dancing numbers arranged by Allan K. Foster. Mr. Huffman has been the stage director of the Winter Garden continuously during the past six years, so that the present "Passing Show" is the fifth revue which he has produced. The new revue has been produced under the personal supervision of J. J. Shubert.

Among the more important members of the cast will be Blanche Ring, Charles Winninger, George Monroe, the Avon Comedy Four, Madge Derry, James and Tillie Barton, Frankie Heath, Meliet Sisters, Ralph Riggs and Katherine Witche, Rath Brothers, Four Haley Sisters, O'Hanlon and Zamboni, Reginald Denny, Olga Cook, Lon Haskell, Hazel Cox, Marcell Manon, Lucille Miller, Walter Wolf, Eddie Miller, Harry Turpin, Verna Burke, Joe Opp and Harriet Carr.

SHAKESPEARE WITHOUT FOOTNOTES.

"LAS," says Julia Marlowe, who appears with E. H. Sothern at the Shubert Theatre in the four weeks Shakespearean festival, during which time "Twelfth Night," "Hamlet" and "The Taming of the Shrew" will be presented, newly staged and newly costumed, "what a cruel injustice has been done to Shakespeare by his commentators. I am thinking of the average man, the man who makes up the audiences which nightly crowd the theatres all through the country; the man who has been endeavoring through our work to entice into the playhouses to see Shakespeare's plays. 'Thousands of men and women who would from the very nature of things love Shakespeare frequently have this love destroyed from the very begin-

STARS of the NEW "PASSING SHOW"



HAZEL COX

ning by the way in which his plays are taught in the schools."

Miss Marlowe always shrinks from being quoted. She feels that her work on the stage must speak for itself, and does not feel that it is necessary to preface her interpretations by discussion. If a player's portrayals need footnotes then Miss Marlowe believes that the player had better give up acting. The actor has the advantage over every other artist in that he is able to express himself through his own personality immediately to the public. The man in the theatre is or should be too busy watching the play and the players to think of explanations. They are fatal, as fatal as footnotes are to the average man reading Shakespeare.

"What will happen if actors talk too much about Shakespeare?" queries Miss Marlowe. "Will not this frighten the public away, make it feel more and more that Shakespeare is not to be enjoyed first hand? Lead him to despair in the idea that Shakespeare must be understood first of all by diligent study? This is not true. Shakespeare is primarily a great dramatist. Give him but half a chance and he will thrill any audience. If the mind of the spectator is frightened by the fear that it will not be receptive, then Shakespeare has from the start a battle to fight, a very real handicap.

"What wouldn't I give to play Shakespeare's plays before an audience which was virgin to the drama, an audience which had never heard of him? Then he would intrigue, delight, thrill as no other playwright can. Then he would come into his own, just as he did back in the Elizabethan days on first nights, when the public went to the theatre to be

BROOKLYN THEATRES.

MAJESTIC—Alice Brady will appear in "Forever After," with the same cast that enabled Owen Davis's play to hang on to Manhattan for 344 consecutive performances.

MONTAUK—John Cort's production of the musical comedy "Fiddlers Three" will come here, with Tavia Belge in the chief role, hedged in by a large and bustling company.

STAR—The press agent feels Brooklyn should be tipped off that the Broadway Belles, with Dollie Davis in a two act burlesque, are coming here, so the local inhabitants can get out the top hat and the full dress suit.



MARJORIE HAST IN "SCANDAL"

the tragedy had 'punch' to borrow from Broadway's jargon. Oh, what a fatal word is 'classic' when it brands an author in the mind of the tired business man.

"Psychoanalysis was, I do believe, first discovered in connection with Shakespeare. There has been too much of it. It is time this Freudian inquisition let up!"

THE PLAYER AND THE PUBLIC.

By FRANK BACON.

HOW frequently you hear the remark, "Give the public what it wants and your fortune is made," a fetish that many managers worship; and how few are benefited thereby!

What would the stage be to-day if allowed to drift along with contributions which had an appeal only to the masses; and how can there be an appeal unless the public has an opportunity to pass a verdict upon the offering; and how much dependence can be placed upon the capacity of the masses to differentiate between a play of purpose and a play of venture?

Would the works of Shakespeare, Lope de Vega or Moliere have been produced if the authors had to wait until the pendulum of public demand swung for their presentation?

Would the charming efforts of Wilde, Barrie, Pinero et al. ever have seen the glare of footlights had authors waited until the public clamored for a change from Dumas, Robertson or Boucicault?

The pathfinder in the realm of histrionic endeavor is just as essential to the public as the pioneer who hews a road through the primeval forest to permit the march of commerce to consummate an objective point beyond and is a task that must be effected now so that future generations may be benefited thereby.

The author, producer or player who merely caters for the approbation of certain element of theatregoers retards the progress of his calling and dwarfs whatever ambition or purpose

he may possess in perfecting the same. The time worn path of conventionality is not the road of to-day, unless it be that fine, big, broad highway of histrionic purpose which allowed the giant minds and visualizers of the past to reach their goal of permanency in the annals of stage lore and reflection. While it is true that many offerings are presented merely to appease the morbid appetites of those who go to the theatre solely for diversion, yet the existence of such offerings is of short duration, and the plays which breathe the spirit of patriotism, virtue and honor live, if not upon box office nutrition, upon the appreciation and esteem of all who believe in the nobler things in dramatic art.

The player who year after year adheres to "give the public what it wants" becomes stagnated in his art, warped in conception and expression and a mere barnacle upon the progressive keel of histrionic activity.

The player, therefore, is a servant of the public to the extent that when entrusted with a characterization he or she should give the public at every performance the very best ability that's in them. But when the public demands from the player a continuance in a line of reflective endeavor that is not compatible with progress then the player should cease to be a subordinate and assert an independent authority correlative to the time.

In all of my efforts as a player and author I have tried to explore a new field of dramatic thought and expression—in "Lightnin'" *OM Bill Jones*, while new to the stage, is an old character in reality. Every hamlet, town or city in the West has a "Bill Jones" and I dare say New York has a few in life. If we only knew where to locate them. But, while I love *Old Bill* I would rather regret the thought of having to play him for the rest of my life.

I have an ambition to create certain American types that have heretofore

Vaudeville and Burlesque.

PALACE—Wilkie Bard, rated as England's music hall favorite, after having performed more times under royal command than any other living actor, will break through the crust here with a repertoire of three tabloid comedies containing the famous "gamut of human emotions." Will M. Cressy and Blanche Dayne in "The New Store," Mabel Mc Cane in a new revue supported by Tom Bryan, Lillian Broderick and William Taylor; Bailey and Cowan in "The Banjo and the Songster," and Masters and Kraft will be among the others who will incite a vertigo of joy.

RIVERSIDE—Bee Palmer, the palsy promoter, and her jazz band will wobble up here, and the theatre is expected to rock in sympathy. Ruth Rye will synopsize around a few, and Charles Grapewin, with Anna Chance, in "Jed's Vacation," and John Guiran and Mlle. Marguerite in a dance revue will be others who will shiver over Miss Palmer's act.

AMERICAN—Dave Genaro and Ann Gold in their musical tabloid, "Wanted A Model"; "Business Is Business," with John K. Hawley and Billie K. Saxton; Jack Goldie and Walters will be on the waiting list to provide atmosphere for the feature pictures.

COLUMBIA—Edward Lee Wrothe, in a two act burlesque, with the Twentieth Century Maids, will put a little pep into the social season around Forty-seventh street.



BLANCHE RING



O'HANLON and ZAMBONI

escaped visualization. There is the old itinerant printer who is an encyclopedia of ideas and a compendium of facts but who is negative in the commercial side of life.

OUT OF THE CHAIR LOFT.

IF RAYMOND HITCHCOCK had not dropped in at the Euclid Avenue Baptist Church in Cleveland

one Sunday evening three years ago Lucille Ager of Sharon Centre, a little village twelve miles from Akron, Ohio, would not now be one of the principal singers in "Hitchy Koo 1919," his new revue at the Liberty Theatre. For Miss Ager was a member of the choir of John D. Rockefeller's Church, as the Euclid Avenue Baptist Church is often called, until that fateful night.

Mr. Hitchcock arrived in Cleveland one Sunday afternoon for his usual visit to the Euclid Avenue Opera House. That evening he strolled up the avenue and as he was passing the Euclid Avenue Baptist Church he was arrested by the singing of the church choir. One voice rose high and clear above the others and Hitchcock was so impressed with it that he entered the church to hear it to more advantage.

At the conclusion of the service he met an old Cleveland friend and in explaining how he happened to be at the service—for Mr. Hitchcock is not a regular churchgoer—the comedian spoke of the remarkable quality of the choir singer's voice.

"That's Miss Ager," said the Cleveland friend, "she's our soprano." "Well, she has a remarkably fine voice," said Mr. Hitchcock, "and if she ever wants to go on the stage I'll give her a place in my company."

"Would you like to meet her?" asked his friend. And to make a long story short Mr. Hitchcock and his friend accompanied Miss Ager to her home after the service. Mr. Hitchcock renewed his offer in person, and much to his surprise Miss Ager announced that she was exceedingly anxious to become a singer on the stage.

However, at that time she was studying with Evan Williams and did not feel that she was ready for a stage

play. As she possessed a fine voice she was naturally anxious to use it and, meeting Hitchcock by accident on Broadway recently, she reminded him of their first meeting at the Euclid Avenue Baptist Church three years ago.

"Do you want to come with my show?" asked the comedian.

"Do you still want me?" asked Miss Ager.

"If you can sing as well as you did that Sunday evening you can be the prima donna of my troupe," replied the comedian.

"My teacher says my voice is better to-day than ever," was the answer.

And so Lucille Ager of Sharon Centre, Ohio, late of the Euclid Avenue Baptist Church choir, is one of the leading singers of "Hitchy Koo 1919."

"THE LOST LEADER."

"THE LOST LEADER," which achieved the distinction of winning success in London despite the fact that it was a play by an Irish author about Irish life, has received more favorable reviews from critics of distinction than any other play of recent years except John Drinkwater's "Abraham Lincoln." Both these plays will be introduced to New York during the fall by William Harris, Jr. It will be the first time that any of Mr. Drinkwater's work has been seen in this country, although he has climbed rapidly in London, until he is now considered by some critics to be on a level with John Massfield. Lennox Robinson is already known to America as one of the principal authors of the group of dramas presented here by the Irish Players.

William Archer makes the following comment in a letter to the *Review*, the American weekly publication: "It is doubtless a pure coincidence, but with peace comes by far the most interesting play we have seen since 1914. It is called 'The Lost Leader,' and its author, Lennox Robinson, was at one time manager of the famous Abbey Theatre in Dublin. At that theatre the play was first produced in February of last year. It has now come to the Court Theatre, where it is acted by a mainly British cast, but the Irish peasant characters have fortunately been imported from their native heath. 'The Lost Leader' is Parnell. When it was understood that a play dealing with that tragic figure was

PLAYS THAT LAST.

Astor, "East Is West"; Belmont, "Boys Will Be Boys"; Bijou, "His Honor Abe Potash"; Booth, "Too Many Hotshots"; Broadhurst, "The Grimace Alibi"; Casino, "The Little Whopper"; Central, "Oh What a Girl!"; Cohan & Harris, "The Royal Vagabond"; Comedy, "The Five Million"; Cort, "John Ferguson"; Eltinge, "The Girl in the Limousine"; Empire, "Declassee"; Forty-eighth Street, "The Storm"; Forty-fourth Street, "Hello, Alexander"; Fulton, "Five o'Clock"; Gaiety, "Lightnin'"; Garrick, "The Faithful"; George M. Cohan, "See-Saw"; Globe, "Apple Blossoms"; Harris, "The Dancer"; Henry Miller's, "Moonlight and Honeysuckle"; Hudson, "Clarence"; Knickerbocker, "Roly-Boly Eyes"; Liberty, "Hitchy Koo"; Longacre, "Adam and Eva"; Lyceum, "The Gold Diggers"; Lyric, "Nothing but Love"; Manhattan Opera House, "The Luck of the Navy"; Maxine Elliott's, "First Is Last"; Morosco, "Civilian Clothes"; New Amsterdam, "Ziegfeld Follies"; New Amsterdam Roof, "Nine o'Clock Revue" and "Midnight Frolic"; Nora Bayes, "Greenwich Village Follies"; Playhouse, "A Young Man's Fancy"; Plymouth, "The Jest"; Princess, "Nightie Night"; Punch and Judy, "Where's Your Wife?"; Republic, "A Voice in the Dark"; Selwyn, "The Challenge"; Shubert, Sothern and Marlowe, "Thirty-ninth Street, 'Scandal!'; Vanderbilt, "At 9:45."

about to be produced some people jumped to the conclusion that it must have been inspired by the success of Mr. John Drinkwater's "Abraham Lincoln," and would prove to be a series of tableaux from the career of the uncrowned King. Not only do dates, however, negative that theory—the whole character of the two pieces is entirely different. Mr. Drinkwater's is in essence a chronicle play; Mr. Robinson's is an imaginative creation quite independent of background.

"When a man of great mind dies under circumstances which are or can be made out to be in the least mysterious the myth-making instinct is always apt to seize the opportunity and set up a rumor that he is not dead but will come again in the fulness of time, to work out his mission, whatever it may have been. Right down to the armistice thousands of people knew on the very best authority that Lord Kitchener was alive and a prisoner in Berlin. The war



FLORENCE SHIRLEY IN "APPLE BLOSSOMS"

Nicholas, if I am not mistaken, has already been resurrected, and it would not be in the least surprising if some pretender, personating him, were one day to play a serious part in Russian politics. Parnell, it may be remembered, died quite unexpectedly, shortly after the divorce case which ruined his career. It used to be whispered in Ireland that no one had ever actually seen him dead—and on that whisper Mr. Robinson has built his play."



Julia Marlowe in "The Taming of the Shrew."



ETHEL BARRYMORE AND VERNON STEEL IN "DECLASSEE"